

To: **Mayor and City Council**
Through: **Ryan Schroeder, City Manager**
From: **Dave Schletty, Assistant Parks and Recreation Director**
Date: **June 8, 2020**

52nd Annual West St Paul Fastpitch Tournament

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Wayne Ball and the Ball Family have been running a men's fastpitch softball tournament in West St Paul for over 50 years. The tournament began at the old Harmon Park fields and then moved to the Sports Complex when that facility opened in the 1980s. The tournament annually draws hundreds of players and spectators to West St Paul for the 3-day tournament. 2020 will mark the 52nd annual tournament and is tentatively scheduled for the weekend of July 17-19. It is tentative due to the current COVID-19 pandemic. Youth sports have just been allowed to start practicing and adult sports in the state have still not been approved to return to playing games. Organizations in other states have found creative ways to safely run softball games and tournaments and still follow CDC guidelines. The Balls are hoping the Governor has loosened restrictions enough by mid-July to run the tournament. They already have numerous teams asking about registering and feel this could be a very successful tournament, since many teams will be anxious to get back on the field for competition.

The tournament will need to follow all current MDH and CDC guidelines for playing games. There will obviously need to be modifications to normal play, but they are confident they will be able to make them work if given approval. Additionally, the organizers understand that concession sales may not be allowed, or may need to take a different form this year. If allowed to proceed by State orders, all safety measures and tournament guidelines will be reviewed and approved by staff. If games are still not allowed by mid-July, the Balls may postpone the tournament to later this summer. If they are unable to go, this will be the first time in 52 years the tournament is canceled.

The Ball Family wants to be sure that the Council is ok with the tournament running safely this year. They will be applying for a temporary license to sell beer at the tournament and the Council will see that approval separately in the near future.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The City will collect a \$550 tournament fee, per the 2020 approved fee schedule, for the weekend tournament.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the Ball Family's request to hold the 52nd annual men's fastpitch softball tournament.